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# THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

AUGUST 15, 2002

VOL. 126

No. 27

## Local church hosts school prayer walk

By Tony Martin  
Associate Editor

Mississippi's schools need prayer. For Jimmy Holcomb, pastor of Antioch Church in Greene County, this meant that feet needed to be added to those prayers — literally.

According to Holcomb, the Woman's Missionary Union had been sponsoring prayer walks in Greene County, but he felt that there needed to be a prayer event for the area schools. On August 1, Antioch Church sponsored a prayer walk specifically focused on prayer for schools in the county.

Antioch has a paved walking track behind the church buildings. "We decided to use this track for our prayer walk. Seven laps around the track equal a mile," said Holcomb.

During the evening, 13 churches with 73 participants walked a cumulative total of 200 miles. The prayer walk was a "come and go" event; participants could come any time between 6:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. to walk.

Adjacent to the track were tables with prayer lists for the different schools. Participants signed in and received a page of requests for their particular school. Then, as each participant circled the track, they would pray specifically for those requests.

As each person completed their walk — as many laps as they wished — they would sign out, with a tally being kept of how many total laps were walked.

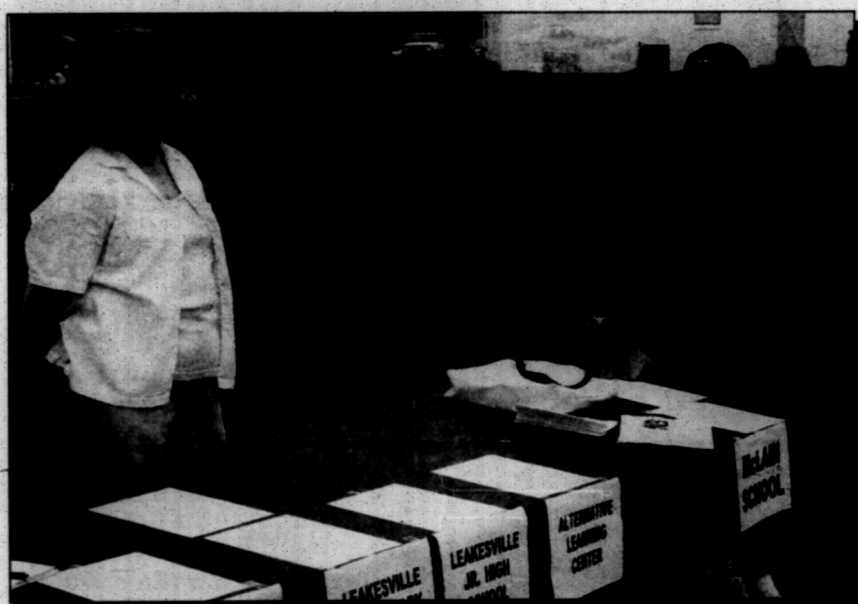
Holcomb scanned the track as participants walked. "Just looking out right now," he said, "we've got a high school principal, a junior high principal, and several teachers walking."

As a car pulled into the parking lot, Holcomb said, "There's our local state representative."

Cindy Hodges, a special education teacher at Leakesville Junior High School, spent a few moments overseeing the sign-in.



**POUNDING THE PAVEMENT** — A group of walkers circle the track adjacent to Antioch Church in Greene County, as prayers are offered for local schools. Dave Dearman, principal of Greene County High School, can be seen at far left. (BR photo by Tony Martin)



**CALL TO PRAYER** — Cindy Hodges (left) special education teacher at Leakesville Junior High School, and Charles Breland, a teacher at McLain Attendance Center, staff the sign-in table at the prayer walk August 1 at Antioch Church in Greene County. (BR photo by Tony Martin)

"Our school system needs prayer," she said. "Changes need to happen, and God is the only one who can bring about these changes. We all need spiritual guidance and wisdom."

Charles Breland, a teacher at McLain Attendance Center, agreed. "Sometimes, the school is the only place where some kids can get any love and attention."

Dave Dearman, principal at Greene County High School, was encouraged by what the Antioch Church is doing in praying for the local schools.

Dearman, who has served the school for 14 years, said,

"We're just here to pray for a good school year. Actually, at our school, we've never stopped praying."

"I think it's great how Antioch Church has been able to get participation from so many other churches. Jimmy (Holcomb) has been a great asset to us."

"He's been teaching a course in biblical history for us, and we've enjoyed having him on campus."

"Dave is a great principal," said Holcomb. "He's a deacon at Fellowship Church in the association, and is also the music director there."

### WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

Directions

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## SBC family rally gaining important supporter

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Momentum for the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) 2003 Kingdom Family Rally continues to build, most recently thanks to the SBC Pastors' Conference.

Mac Brunson, president of the Pastors' Conference and pastor of First Church, Dallas, has invited the SBC Council on Family Life to present the Kingdom Family Rally during the Monday evening Pastors' Conference session June 16 in Phoenix.

Brunson told Baptist Press that in talking to Tom Elliff, who chairs the council, "it would be great to have the rally on Monday night — and also to focus the whole theme of the Pastors' Conference around the family and the home and marriage."

Changing the Kingdom Family Rally from Thursday, June 19, to Monday, June 16, will simplify convention-goers' schedules in addition to eliminating an extra night's stay in Phoenix, site of the June 17-18 SBC annual meeting.

Historically, the Monday evening session of the Pastors' Conference has drawn one of the highest attendance marks of the convention week. Both Brunson and Elliff anticipate that this partnership will give added incentive for attending both the Pastors' Conference and the convention in Phoenix, a city outside major SBC population centers.

The rally will feature such key family experts as James and Shirley Dobson of Focus on the Family, FamilyLife's Dennis and Barbara Rainey and author and conference leader Gary Chapman.

Brunson, in noting that the entire Sunday-Monday Pastors' Conference also will emphasize the family, said, "I think that the greatest challenge the church has today is ministering to families — and perhaps the greatest challenge that any pastor has is ministering to his own family."

"We're putting together what we hope and believe will be a conference that will minister to pastors, pastors' wives, pastors'

kids and equip them to go back and be able to do ministry to families in their churches," Brunson said.

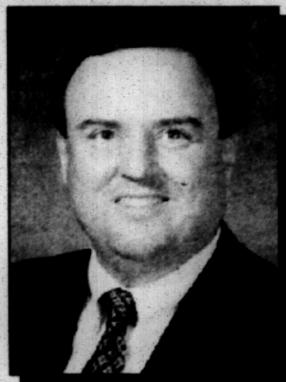
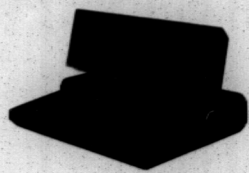
The rally will seek to nurture "a family marked by moral purity and fidelity; a family marked by a commitment to spend time each week listening to God and listening to one another; a family committed to fiscal, or financial, responsibility; committed to supporting the local church; and a family also that has committed itself to becoming involved in Great Commission projects which will reach people around the world, changing their lives and the lives of your family members as well," Elliff said.

The SBC Council on Family Life was created during the 2000 SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla., and functions under the auspices of the SBC Executive Committee.

Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson, serves as a member of the Council on Family Life.



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**Postmaster: Send changes of address  
to The BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box  
530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Send  
news, communication, and address  
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RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS  
39205-0530 (601) 968-3800  
Fax: (601) 292-3330  
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VOLUME 126 NUMBER 23  
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4  
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist  
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,  
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$9.35 per  
year payable in advance. Economy plans  
available for cooperating Mississippi  
churches. Periodicals postage paid at  
Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State  
Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items —  
one calendar week prior to requested pub-  
lication date. Advertising — two calendar  
weeks prior to requested publication date.

# Fighting the good fight

In the relentless political battle being waged to normalize homosexuality in this country, it often seems as if those of us who oppose such perversion are destined to lose. In recent years, television's most popular shows have introduced homosexual characters in regular roles. Some top-rated shows, in fact, are based completely on the homosexual lifestyle.

Advertisers have begun to cater to the homosexual market, at first featuring mere suggestion of a homosexual relationship, but of late becoming more and more explicit in their representations.

Mainstream magazine covers trumpet the pride and sense of accomplishment some high-profile homosexuals feel as they announce they are "coming out of the closet."

In many areas of the country, schoolchildren at the earliest levels of public education are being indoctrinated with required curricula that include such book offerings as *Heather Has Two Mommies*, and *My Two Dads*. Even exercising a First Amendment right to voice opposition to such a lifestyle is legally classified as a hate crime in this country's more exotic locales.

Falling into line like tipped dominoes, America's largest corporations rush to announce that they are providing full benefits to homosexuals and their partners equal to those of married employees. The list includes Kodak, Levi's, American Airlines, Exxon Mobile, Disney, Apple, and a growing host of others.

It's enough to depress the people who believe what Romans 1:18-32 and 1 Cor. 6:12-20 have to say about the subject. As a matter of fact, when we bring up the homosexual issue in spiritual terms we are branded as sick, backwards, hate-filled, and wicked. As Ed Young, pastor of First Church in Houston, Texas, discovered along with several other pastors, to mention Bible truth concerning this issue from the pulpit requires bodyguards for personal protection.

At least one homosexual advocacy group has vowed to disrupt the annual

meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention until the day when the convention decries the "spiritual violence" it has inflicted on homosexuals by adhering to Biblical principles.

Just when all seems lost, however, a ray of sanity like a bright streak of sunlight manages to leak through to assure us that there are still a lot of Americans who don't intend to give up.

Focus on the Family's Citizen Issues Alert faxletter reports that since the national office of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) announced in February that it intended to force local chapters to embrace openly homosexual volunteers, the organization's telephones have apparently been ringing off the walls.

The Arizona Republic newspaper reported that the local Phoenix chapter of BBBSA alone received more than 20,000 e-mails regarding the forced acceptance of the new policy. The national BBBSA office will not provide information on the number of e-mails, telephone calls, and letters it has received on this issue.

However, the faxletter reported that the national office quickly printed materials on how to respond to the public and has begun shipping the materials to local chapters — a sure sign that they are receiving considerable complaints.

"It's clear they are feeling the heat on this issue," Peter Sprigg of the Family Research Council told the faxletter.

Meanwhile, Baptist Press reports that in Minnesota a nine-member federal jury unanimously agreed that the Minnesota Department of Corrections violated the

"SOME OF US NEED TO RE-BOOT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD, LOG ON TO HIS WILL, AND DELETE THE SIN...."



REVEREND ERIC IS TRYING.

rights of two employees who were reprimanded for quietly reading their Bibles during a state-mandated diversity training session entitled, *Gays and Lesbians in the Work Force*. The employees were awarded \$78,000 each, paid of course by Minnesota's taxpayers.

Maybe there is hope. Maybe the Lord does send occasional signals not to quit the fight. This much we know: the Bible couldn't be clearer on the issue, and that should be reason enough to hang in there in the political battle over homosexual rights.

Come to think of it, that should be reason enough to hang in there on any issue.

## GUEST OPINION:



### *Geyser Falls: trying to mix oil and water*

By Lee Yancey, consultant  
Miss. Christian Action Comm.

The phone rang and I answered it. A secretary at a church where I once served wanted me to come downstairs and talk to a homeless man at the door.

Shaking my hand, he asked me to baptize him immediately. I gingerly explained that (1) we baptize people who have professed faith in Christ publicly and seek to join our church, and (2) that there was no water currently in the baptistry and it would take many hours to fill it.

"Well, how can I get my sins washed away if you won't baptize me?" he shouted.

Seeing that his mental condition was lacking, I tried to explain the meaning of baptism and that it was not the water itself that cleansed us. The water was only a symbol of what Jesus was doing in our lives.

I questioned him at length about his relationship with Christ and got nowhere. He finally tired of the discussion and left.

Earlier this week, I received a call from a youth

minister who wondered about the ethics of taking a youth group to the new Geyser Falls Water Park near Philadelphia.

Geyser Falls is a development of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. Other developments include the Silver Star Casino, the Golden Moon Casino, and the Dancing Rabbit Golf Course — all in the Philadelphia area.

Package deals that include all of the above attractions are available to families, along with meals and lodging.

While there is nothing wrong with the water at Geyser Falls, that water is a symbol of something greater

than itself. Just like the baptistry water is a symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the water at Geyser Falls is a symbol of the gambling and greed of the casinos that have invaded Mississippi.

The water at Geyser Falls is a siren calling to families, to hook them into spending their money in the nearby Silver Star and the Golden Moon casinos.

I don't think it is possible to separate one of these developments from another when they are owned by the same people, advertised as package deals, and the money goes in the same big fat pot.

It is no secret in Mississippi that gambling did not deliver what some thought it would. In the last 10 years, we have seen crime, bankruptcies, and sleaze move into the areas where the casinos are located.

Why would we want to encourage more of the same by parking our church buses in the parking lot of Geyser Falls Water Park?

Wouldn't we be showing our children and teenagers that the Golden Moon and the Silver Star casinos across the way are their next stop when they're older?

Would you take a group of senior adults to the casino for an outing? Of course not.

Anything that encourages people to throw their money away should be off limits. By not supporting the Moon and the Star, you are pointing the way to the Son for the next generation of Mississippians.

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# CWJC celebrating a special anniversary

**BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)** — Melissa Motley dropped out of high school when she became pregnant with her first child. She married and then had two more children, but within a few years her marriage dissolved.

"I just felt like nobody cared about me," Motley said, even though she pulled her life together enough to earn her GED. Then a friend suggested she visit the Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) site in Marshall County, Ala.

"I needed some computer skills but didn't know where to get them," Motley said, "but I got more than just computer skills at CWJC. I realized that I am more than nothing. God put me here for a reason, and I will be somebody someday by the grace of God," she said.

Motley plans to transfer to Jacksonville (Ala.) State University after her initial studies at a local junior college.

"Things have gotten easier since I've learned that I can look up and get my strength," she said. "I'm going to finish school, and I'm going to be a nurse in four years."

Motley's story is all too real for hundreds of other women throughout the country who have been aided by Christian Women's Job Corps, a ministry of Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), Southern Baptist Convention, now celebrating its fifth year.

"This is ministry evangelism at its best," said Debbie Snyder, church and community min-



**GOING TO WORK** — Laura West (second from right) of Tupelo, a recent Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) graduate, admires her donated automobile along with Tupelo CWJC director Cheryl Nelson (right), CWJC volunteer teacher Mildred Lollar (second from left), and Ralph Cain, associate director of missions for Lee County Association in Tupelo. (BR photo by Tim Nicholas)

istries director of Shelby Association in Birmingham, Ala., where the first CWJC site was launched in 1997.

Exemplifying CWJC's growth in scope, the Shelby County outreach has expanded to a partnership with the County Department of Human Resources and Central Alabama Skills Center for GED classes and job training and placement.

"We didn't reinvent the wheel with our program," Snyder said. "We use the resources around us, and we all work together."

In the last 10 months, a local auto mechanic school has become involved in the effort by doing repair work on 19 automobiles that have been donated to the site.

"When women were given jobs, they didn't even have enough money to go out and buy even the cheapest of cheap cars to give transportation to

and from work," Snyder recounted. "Several people have donated their cars, and women are able to hold down jobs because they have secure transportation."

Shelby Association has committed to paying insurance for the first six months the women have cars. After then, the new owner takes over the insurance payments.

CWJC was founded by WMU in 1997 with the purpose of providing a Christian missions context in which women help women in need become equipped for life and employment. Participants in a typical CWJC program, in addition to training in life skills and job readiness, are involved in Bible study, and are matched with a trained Christian woman who will be her mentor as she moves from dependency to self-sufficiency.

Other CWJC volunteers may help in preparing meals, teaching classes, ministering to family members, hosting celebrations, providing transportation or child care and basic office duties.

About 135 CWJC sites have been established in 36 states, and coordinators are now in place in more than 40 states, including

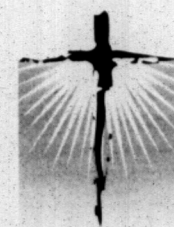
Mississippi. Information about CWJC, including how to launch a CWJC site, can be accessed on the Internet at [www.wmu.com/ministry/cwjc](http://www.wmu.com/ministry/cwjc).

National Certification Training is offered several times a year to potential CWJC site coordinators. Sessions on July 23-26 in Philadelphia took on a special multiethnic flavor, with training provided to volunteers from Hispanic, African American, Filipino, Korean, Haitian, Ukrainian, German, and Anglo backgrounds.

The history of CWJC is recapped in the video, *There is Hope: The Continuing Story of Christian Women's Job Corps*, and the book, *No Longer Forgotten: The Remarkable Story of Christian Women's Job Corps*.

Those and other resources, such as the CWJC newsletter, *The Connection*, can be ordered from WMU Customer Service at (800) 968-7301.

Each site is responsible for its own funding. The funding can be very minimal if the site



MISSISSIPPI  
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PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

AUGUST 15, 2002

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is staffed by volunteers or it can entail a budget for salaries and facilities. Information on grant writing and grant sources is covered during National Certification Training provided to local leaders.

Jeanie Reynolds of Nashville said the CWJC participant she has mentored has been "a joy to work with. She was totally devoted to her family, and she loved her three children as much as I love my own. I got back so much more than I gave."

For more information on CWJC in Mississippi, contact Mississippi WMU consultant Tammy Anderson at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3323 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 323. E-mail: [tanderson@mbcb.org](mailto:tanderson@mbcb.org).

## Judge nixes takeover

**WASHINGTON (BP)** — A federal judge has blocked a California city from taking property owned by a large church in order for a major retail store to be built on the land. The city of Cypress discriminated against Cottonwood Christian Center when it invoked eminent domain in May in order to obtain the church's property and turn it over to the discount chain Costco, said Judge David Carter of the Central District of California. The city substantially burdened the church's religious exercise under both the free-exercise clause of the First Amendment and a 2000 federal law, the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, Carter wrote in a 36-page opinion released Aug. 6. In granting a preliminary injunction, Carter said there was "strong evidence that [the city's] actions are not neutral, but instead specifically aimed at discriminating against Cottonwood's religious uses." Cottonwood, which has grown from about 50 members at its founding in 1983 to more than 4,000 adult members, holds its worship services in a building in Los Alamitos that seats 700 people. The church holds two Saturday services and four Sunday services each week to accommodate its members. It also uses shuttles to transport people from off-site parking lots to the church building. The church put together six parcels of land in a Cypress redevelopment zone and closed on the purchase of the 18-acre property in 1999. While the church was seeking approval to build on the property, the city began action the next year to seek other use of the land. When the Redevelopment Agency of Cypress offered to buy the property from the church for more than \$14.5 million in February of this year, Cottonwood declined to sell.

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

The tomb of the high priest Caiaphas, instrumental in the crucifixion of Jesus, is found by accident about a mile south of the old city of Jerusalem. A heavy piece of engineering equipment, moving over the underground chamber, collapsed the roof of the tomb.

### 20 years ago

Members of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board vote to authorize executive secretary Earl Kelly to sign the final papers merging Clarke College, a junior college in Newton owned by the Board, with Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton.

### 50 years ago

The 10th annual Negro Women's Institute is held in Edwards, at the facilities of the Southern Christian Institute. There were 83 people in attendance representing 67 churches — 53 of which are being assisted financially by the predominantly white Missionary Society.



# NOBTS music classes to begin August 19

August 19 begins the fifth of eight courses at eight locations in Mississippi sponsored by New Orleans Seminary. The eight courses are:

- Song Leading.
- Worship Planning.
- Reading Music: Rhythm/Pitch.
- Reading Music: Harmony/Melody.
- Hymnology.
- Music Administration/Staff Relations.
- Survey of Music Resources.
- Class Voice.

These courses are designed to provide basic training for bivocational music directors and other music leaders in churches.

The eight courses meet two hours per week. Each course is eight weeks in length. The cycle of courses is scheduled over a two-year period. Each course is independent and has no prerequisite.

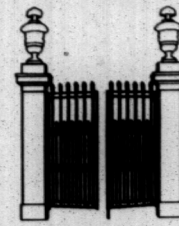
Each student who completes the eight courses earns a Church Music Certificate from New Orleans Seminary plus a credit of eight hours toward an on campus degree program. There is a one-time registration fee of \$25. The cost of each course is \$85. Scholarships are available for first-time students. The grant is limited to one

person per church.

The fifth course, Hymnology, will meet once a week for two hours for eight consecutive weeks at:

- **Broadmoor Church, Jackson** — beginning August 19 (7-9 p.m.); Jimmy McCaleb, Teacher.
- **First Church, Columbus** — beginning August 19 (7-9 p.m.); Bobby Sanderson, Teacher.
- **First Church, Purvis** — beginning August 19 (6:30 - 8:30 p.m.); James Hayes, Teacher.

## New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary



• **First Church, Booneville** — beginning August 19 (7-9 p.m.); LuAnne Ford, Teacher.

• **Northcrest Church, Meridian** — beginning August 19 (6:30 - 8:30 p.m.); Buddy McElroy, Teacher.

• **Hernando Church, Hernando** — beginning August 19 (7-9 p.m.); Barry Tweedy, Teacher.

• **Tri-County Associational Building, Columbia** — beginning August 20 (6:30-8:30 p.m.); Kenny Adams, Teacher.

• **Meadville Church, Meadville** — beginning August 20 (6:30-8:30 p.m.); Chuck McMinn, Teacher.

These classes could be offered at other locations in the state also, where eight-ten students are interested in enrolling.

For more information, contact coordinator Jimmy McCaleb at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (292) 3273 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 273. E-mail: jmc-caleb@mbcb.org.

## VA to admit homosexual chaplains

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Veterans Administration (VA) has approved a predominantly homosexual religious denomination to provide chaplains for its healthcare facilities. The Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) recently registered with the Veterans Administration, a VA spokesman confirmed Aug. 5.

The MCC describes itself as "a worldwide fellowship of Christian churches with a special outreach to the world's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities," according to its Internet site. The MCC also has an application pending with the federal government to provide chaplains to the military branches, it reported.

The VA has 219 denominations who have registered for chaplaincy service. There are 623 chaplains in service with the VA. This figure includes fulltime, part-time, and "intermittent" chaplains, according to the VA. The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board has 65 chaplains affiliated with the VA.

### WALKING UNDER THE RAINBOW

The time was the middle of a hot, humid, Mississippi summer when it is not unusual for the heating of the day to produce large thunderstorms with lots of rain and beautiful lightning displays.

That's the kind of day this was. I had just gotten home at the end of a belly-washer of a downpour. Usually these storms die out as the sun goes down, so I decided to go out for a long walk. It was still sprinkling and the clouds were still dark, but knowing how these things work, I figured I would soon be in the dry, so I headed out.

As I walked along, with the steam rising from the road and sprinkles still falling all around, I had gone only a few blocks when I just happened to glance in the right direction and there it was — a huge, horizon-to-horizon rainbow. I will never cease to be amazed at the beauty of God's splendor.

I walked along, looking at the rainbow with its backdrop of black clouds, and I thought about the day God created the first rainbow, hung it in the sky, and told Noah that it was a symbolic sermon — *Every time you see it, you can remember that I promise that I will never again destroy the earth with water.*

It was a promise of love, and care, and desire on the part of God that the people he had made would love and serve him. Not many of the promises in Scripture are conditional. This one was just flat out unconditional — *This is what I am going to do or not do.*

Look at the rainbow and remember God's love.

As I walked along in the drizzle, looking at the rainbow, three encouraging thoughts came to my heart from God's great promise:



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

• **Look up!** What is true of the rainbow may be applicable to many, if not all, of the promises of God. Look up!

It is hard to see the promises of God when we are looking down. It is fascinating to think that Noah had a window in the ark, and he could look out and up. You wonder how many times he, or Mrs. Noah, or one of the boys, walked over there to check outside and see what the sky was like.

For 40 days all they saw was what they didn't need any more of — rain! No doubt you have felt that way. As you faced another day, nothing seemed to be getting better; just more of what you didn't think you needed.

The problems of life just seemed to continue to rain down, but one day something changed — God stopped the rain and then, in time, hung beauty back in the sky of your life and reminded you to keep looking up!

It seems to be an easy trap that we sometimes fall into, looking the wrong way, much like Mary when she went to the tomb and looked inside that cavern of death where Jesus once lay. She was focused on death, destruction, and shattered dreams — looking the wrong way.

Someone walked up behind her and said, "Mary." She thought it was the gardener and wanted to know if he knew

where they had taken the body of Jesus. He spoke again and she recognized his voice and turned away from the tomb and there was the triumphant Savior. Look up!

• **Turn Around!** It was probably 15-20 minutes away from sunset and I continued to gaze at this rainbow in the sky. As I walked, out of the corner of my eye something caught my attention. I turned around to look and there before me was the most beautiful, incredible, bright sunset breaking through the clouds in the west. It was like huge swords of splendor reaching out from the sun.

The brilliance of the sun had created the beauty of the rainbow. While the rainbow was beautiful and breathtaking, there were still raindrops and storms on the horizon, but at that moment the sun dominated everything in that direction.

The writer of Hebrews puts us right on target when he says, "...and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Oftentimes, moving along through life, we turn our heads the wrong way, but if you will turn around, you might see the brilliance of the Son in your life.

In that afternoon's sermon from God's symbolism, one last word came to my heart. It was a word that I believe God was instilling in the heart of Noah...

• **Trust Me!** Yes — look up, turn around, and trust God. He has a plan for your life. He has never, ever, broken one of his promises and he will not. You can trust God, but I have learned that you never graduate from the school of faith. You can be saved by faith in Jesus, but your walk with him will have courses every day that will bring you to some point of opportunity to exercise your faith again.

Can you trust God through the storms that pass over your life — through your disease that has invaded your life? Can you trust him when those around you are not doing as you think they ought, or the resources of life have run low or completely out?

Can you trust him when you can't come up with the answers to the "Why" questions of life? Can you trust him when a friend does you wrong, or when tragedy takes a friend, or the stock market falls, or you fail the test, or the baby dies, or you fail to get the job, or you fail at doing the job?

Each day there will be some tests.

On that summer afternoon, with raindrops falling all around me, I continued walking. Then, all of a sudden it looked to me like I was walking right under the rainbow. From one side to the other, it stretched across the sky and it seemed as though I was about to stand directly under it.

I paused and said, "Thank you God, for your grace and love, for your marvelous promises that stretch from sky to sky over me, every day, everywhere."

Today, just remember that you too can walk under the rainbow!



# Pakistani Christians hurt, not discouraged

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Ghazala Amoon arrived March 17 at the Protestant International Church in Islamabad, Pakistan, 15 minutes late for the regular Sunday morning worship service. She had left her twin sons in the basement for Sunday School and sat down with her husband just a few rows from the back of the church.

The service had already started, and everything was in perfect order, she said. Then her husband, Amoon Sharon, went to the car to treat a sinus infection, and Ghazala suddenly felt uncomfortable.

She felt a pain in her legs and had a strange feeling of uneasiness. For no particular reason, she said, she worried that her children were alone in the basement. The pastor began his sermon, and everyone was silent.

Suddenly, the silence was shattered.

"We heard noise like a (fire)cracker in the foyer," Ghazala said. "I thought it must be some short circuit or something. After a second, a tall man came inside the church. He was wearing a pouch on his waist and had something in his hand. He started throwing grenades at the congregation. There was confusion and the people got so scared and didn't know what was going on around them."

Ghazala recalls seeing the church windows break, sending glass into the congregation. The chandeliers broke, and the curtains ripped and flew out. Blood splashed on the walls and ceiling.

"Two rows ahead of me a man was killed. I made a narrow escape by heading toward

the door. The shrapnel hit my back. I slipped on pieces of glass and lost my shoes," she said. "I was feeling so helpless because Amoon wasn't with

on the floor. I didn't find my wife. I came out and saw her crying for Daud and Suleman."

The eight-year-old sons, whose names when translated

"Then my wife pushed me toward the church and told me to help people. I had a vehicle, so I was able to take them to the hospital," Amoon said. "I didn't

know at the time that my wife was injured. I don't know how she took the pain."

After taking others to the hospital, he learned that his wife had shrapnel in her back and sought treatment for her. The operation lasted three and a half hours to remove the glass and other debris. Four pieces still remain in the back of her legs. One of them is painful and may be removed in the future, but the deeper ones will stay.

In all, five worshippers, including two Americans, were killed and more than 40 were injured, including four Southern Baptists.

Ghazala said the incident left her and her family confused and traumatized for about two months, but then God gave them courage.

"Now we see that God is really merciful and faithful. He really took us out of that valley of the shadow of death," she said. "... God spared us and we believe that he wants us to testify to his love and faithfulness to other people. He saved us from that place and really gave us a chance to experience his faithfulness and love."

When the boys went back to school, they told the other children how Jesus had sent the angels to open the door and let them out of the basement. When Amoon and Ghazala went to a parent-teacher meeting several weeks later, the parents of the children mentioned the story and asked about Jesus.



RECALLING THE TERROR — Ghazala Amoon (second from left) and her husband Amoon Sharon (left) tell Green Pines Church member Stacy Thompson about surviving the bombing of their church in Pakistan. In the background are their eight-year-old twins, Daud and Suleman. Thompson met the couple while on a mission trip to Pakistan several years ago and hosted the family on a visit to Raleigh, N.C. (BP photo by Bob Carey)

me, and the children were in the basement. I just didn't know what to do. Suddenly I started calling, 'Jesus, Jesus, please have mercy.' I felt his presence there and I was sure he would not leave us or forsake us."

At the car, Amoon heard the blast. "I was in shock. I couldn't control myself. I knew my sons were in the basement for Sunday School, and my wife was in the very back rows of the sanctuary," he said. "I saw people coming out, but I didn't see my wife."

"I rushed to the basement, but my sons weren't there. I ran back up to the sanctuary, and it was all filled with smoke. I was walking slowly so I wouldn't step on people who were laying

are David and Solomon, were not hurt because their Sunday School teacher had led them out a back door to safety.

"Usually the door is locked and never used. It is usually stuck, so that we have to try three or four times to get it open but it opened at once as the teacher tried to get the children out," Ghazala said.

"Several days after the bombing, the teacher tried to open the door again, but he tried three or four times before it would open. My children tell me that Jesus and the angels opened the door for them that day," he said.

When the family reunited, they took a deep breath and praised God.

## Missionary children's school attacked in Pakistan

WASHINGTON (BP) — Gunmen who attacked a boarding school for the children of Christian missionaries and diplomats in Pakistan Aug. 5 left a note saying the assault was in retaliation for injustices they said were experienced by Muslims in various conflict zones, CNSNews.com reported Aug. 6.

Six adults, all Pakistanis, were killed in the shooting at the Murree Christian School 50 kilometers north of Islamabad, and at least four others were injured.

The dead included two hired security guards, a cook, a receptionist, a carpenter, and a man described as a bystander.

Thirty Americans were among the 150 pupils between the ages of six and 18 attending classes at the time of the attack. Others hail from 20 countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Philippines, and European nations.

No children were hurt during the 15-minute incident before the four gunmen fled over a fence behind the school in the Himalayan foothills, according to its Australian principal, Russell Morton.

The attackers, armed with automatic rifles, left a note which reportedly expressed anger about the deaths of Muslims in the Middle East and Kashmir.

An Australian staffer, Barry Lock, told Australian radio the gunmen had tried to force their way into a hospital building where kindergarten children were holding class, firing through windows.

"We're a Christian school and we believe that the God that we serve cared for us in quite a remarkable way, although it was at the cost of six Pakistani friends and staff," he said.

Heavily armed soldiers guarded the school Aug. 6 as the director and staff met to discuss the school's immediate future.

Morton said he thought the attackers intended to cause trouble for the Pakistani government. Gen. Pervez Musharraf has become an important ally of the United States in the campaign against terror, upsetting militant Islamic groups in Pakistan as a result.

Since the U.S.-led campaign was launched after Sept. 11, terrorists have struck a number of foreign and Christian targets in Pakistan, killing American, French, Pakistani, and Afghan nationals in a series of bomb and shooting attacks.

The attack was the third on an obvious Christian institution, and it prompted the Pakistan Christian Congress to criticize the government for not taking Christians' security seriously.

"The killing is an open indication of [the] presence of the militant groups in Pakistan and a challenge to the government," said the body's president, Nazir Bhatti, in a statement.

State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said the United States condemned "this outrageous act of terrorism."

Secretary of State Colin Powell had spoken to Musharraf by phone, extending his condolences, Reeker said.

Meanwhile security concerns shut down the U.S. Consulate in Pakistan's largest city, Karachi, on Aug. 5.

Reeker said the mission would remain closed until an agreement could be reached with local government authorities over security issues related to the reopening of a road closed after 12 Pakistanis were killed in a car bomb attack outside the consulate June 14.

## Mom moves to protect 'Pledge girl'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The mother of an 8-year-old whose father thrust her into battle against the Pledge of Allegiance has asked that the girl be removed from the case. "I do not wish for my daughter, for the rest of her life, to be known as 'the atheist child who hated the Pledge,'" Sandra Banning said in a declaration accompanying a motion filed Aug. 5 with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco.

"It is therefore imperative that the court allow the [case] to go forward, if at all, without my daughter as a party," Banning said.

Soon after a stunning 2-1 decision by a panel within the federal court June 26 against the Pledge of Allegiance, Banning acknowledged that she and her daughter, who has remained unnamed, are members of an evangelical church in California, Calvary Chapel of Laguna Creek in Elk Grove, Calif. — and they have no objection to the Pledge of Allegiance.

In a Fox News interview in July, Banning said her daughter told her, "I'm still going to say 'one nation under God.' I'll say it quietly so no one will know I'm breaking the law."



## NAMES IN THE NEWS

**Crossview Church,** recently honored Don Williams, pastor for 10 years, and Bill Rice, minister of music for 15 years, with a

reception and honorarium. Pictured (from left) are Rice and wife Debbie, and Williams and wife Linda.



Bill and Debbie Rice & Don and Linda Williams

**Youth Bible Drillers at Williamsville Church, Kosciusko,** pictured (from left) are Lenita Gentry, leader; Emily Jones; Kelly Quick; Meagan Burdine; Dustin Gentry; Jordan East; Mack Vaughn; and Cathy Barnes, leader.



GAs of Williamsville Church, Kosciusko

**Children Bible Drillers at Williamsville Church, Kosciusko,** pictured (from left) are Sarah Papisan; Julie Rawson, leader; Micah East; Jacob Buchanan; and Ben East.

GAs of Williamsville Church, Kosciusko, (pictured from left; front row) are Amy Cappelli; Gene Tew; Jodi Crowson; Karen Cauthen, summer missionary; Hannah East; (second row) Sarah Papisan; Kerry Dabbs;



Children's Bible Drill Team, Williamsville Church, Kosciusko



VBS Participants of Springdale Church, Ripley

**Tabby Webber;** Sarah Plunkett; Daphne Dabbs, leader; (back row) Anne Plunkett, leader; Tammy Webber; and Cynthia Dean.

**RAs of Williamsville Church, Kosciusko,** (pictured from left, front row) are Brandon McCroy; Cory Tew; JP Capelli; Brandon Cochran; Sam Dabbs; (second row) Ben East; Jacob Buchanan; Karen Cauthen, summer missionary; Micah East; Gene Webber; Jonathan Sanders; Ethan Willis; (back row) Dewayne Cochran, Robert McCroy, Dexter Dabbs, Stanley Sanders, and Danny Plunkett, leaders.

**Robert S. Magee, 70,** a native of Collins, died on July 23 in Ruston, La. Services were held at Temple Church, Ruston, La., where he pastored from 1964 to 1998. Churches he pastored in Mississippi were Cold Springs, Collins; Puckett;

Mt. Moriah; Brookhaven; and First, Carthage. Magee received his education at Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary. Survivors include his wife Vivian, Eve Spell Magee of Ruston, La.; children, Bruce Magee of Ruston, La., and Vivian

Gayle Magee Red of Garland, Texas; and five grandchildren. Memorials may be made to the Robert and Vivian Magee Scholarship Fund, Temple Baptist Church, 1515 South Service Road West, Ruston, LA 71270.

**Parkway, Houston:** VBS, July 28-Aug. 1; total enrollment, 231; average attendance, 182; professions of faith, 11; Lisa Thomas, VBS director; Gregg Thomas, pastor.



RAs of Williamsville Church, Kosciusko

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## Homecomings

**Arkadelphia, Bailey:** Aug. 18; 11 a.m.; lunch in fellowship hall following service; Joe Ratcliff, former pastor, speaker; John R. Koch, pastor.

**Bethel, Hazlehurst:** Aug. 25; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish luncheon and fellowship following worship service; Van Windom, Roxie, speaker; Brenda Nixon, music; Del Gann, interim pastor.

**Oak Grove, Shubuta:** Aug. 18; 11 a.m. service and potluck dinner in fellowship hall; message by Terry Irby, pastor.

**D'Lo, D'Lo:** Aug. 18; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch; Steve White, Brookhaven, guest speaker; Jeff Sanders, D'Lo Church, music; Robert Sones, pastor.

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## JUST FOR THE RECORD

**Chad Varga**, former NBA player, will be returning to the NET, youth facility of Crossgates Church, Brandon, on Aug. 27 and 28. For additional information, call Scott Brooks at (601) 825-2562.

A children's retreat will be held at **Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto**, Sept. 13-14 for grades 3-6. Featured will be John Yates and Friends. For more information about registration, call (601) 734-2322. The deadline is Aug. 25.

**Crossgates Church, Brandon**, will present Geron and Becky Davis and Kindred Souls, Sunday, Aug. 18 at 6 p.m. For additional information, call the church at (601) 825-2562.

**Clebe and Deanna McClary** of South Carolina will be speaking at First Church, Fulton, on Aug. 24-25. Deanna will speak at the second annual Women's Conference, Saturday at 10 a.m. with lunch served. Clebe will speak at a men and boy's rally Saturday at 6 p.m. with supper. They will also be leading a Patriotic Rally on Sunday at 6 p.m. Clebe McClary is an American hero, having lost his left arm and left eye in Viet Nam. Tickets can be purchased through the church office until Aug. 21. For additional information, call (662) 862-3207. Tommy Winders is pastor.

**Tangipahoa, Summit**, will have a dedication service for its Family Life Center on Aug. 18. Dinner will be served following the morning worship service. Troy Mercer is pastor.

College students from across the state served over the summer as staff members at **Gulfshore Baptist Assembly** in Pass Christian. Pictured (row 1, from left) are: Andrew Strehlow, Brookhaven; Jarrod Dearman, Carriere; Jonathan Moore, Axis,

Ala; Beau Cummings, Drew; Justin Means, Puckett; Jason Odom, Ocean Springs; Josh Braddy, Picayune; Scott Thompson, Foxworth; Daniel Zinc, Bay St. Louis; Lee Shumpert, Crossett, Ark; (row 2) Laura Banks, Gulfport; Veronica Paige Harper, Meridian; Kelly Dabbs, Meridian; Jennifer Jones, Toombs; Stacy Lynn Billger, Plano, Tex; Marie Carter,

McGee, Hickory; Dennis Bridges, Fulton; Frank Simmons (manager); Randy Mayzak, Perlington; Brad Davis, Long Beach. Not pictured: Amy Bellande, Kodiak, Alaska; Chad Jones, Natchez; John Poore, Meridian; Jeremy Rayner, Laurel; Don Scrivener, Louisville; and Claire Walton, Jackson.



2002 Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Summer Staff

Greenville; Amanda Caruthers, Senatobia; Andrea Jay, Becker; Angie Pilgrim, Memphis, Tenn; Jessica Pinion, Florence; (row 3) Mitzi Rogers, Forest; Kandi Tims, Petal; Brandi Sisk, Okoloma; Hope Henderson, Brandon; Amy Thronton, Tupelo; Brooke James, Moss Point; Mitzi Quartermann, Jackson; Julie Lowery, New Albany; Karen Sheffield, Picayune; Nathan Trosper, Louisville; Cory Dewett, Greenwood; (row 4) Robert and Carra Purvis (houseparents); Jeff Feinberg, MossPoint; Hannah Gibson, Pearl; Kimberly Pierce, Louisville; Anna Katherine Morris, Tupelo; Emily Blanchard, Louisville; Jason Courtney, Greenwood; Amanda Smith, Baldwin; Joel Bullock, Madison; Kaleena Shields, Becker; (row 5) Lewis "Trae" Catrett, Hurley; Ken Crumpton, Raleigh; Ryan Lance Baggett, Monticello; Shane Mason, Monticello; Dustin

Youth from **Woodland Hills Church, Jackson**, spent a week in Brownsville, Texas, where they conducted VBS in a neighborhood park. The youth also went into Matamoros, Mexico, a small border town, and witnessed door to door and handed out 50 Spanish New Testaments, and over 150 tracts were handed out in Matamoros, with a dozen adult professions of faith.



Youth of Woodland Hills Church, Jackson



## REVIVALS

**Furrs, Pontotoc**: Aug. 18-22; beginning Sunday morning at 11 a.m. and evening services at 7 p.m.; Randy Bain, Water Valley, speaker; Micah Lambert, music; Joe Herndon, pastor.

**Calvary, Canton**: Aug. 18-21; Sunday, 10:15 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jerry Mixon, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, evangelist; Curtis Carter, Brandon, music; Tom Rayburn, pastor.

**Murphy Creek, (Winston)** Aug. 18-22; 6 p.m. on Sunday; 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Mon.-Thurs.; Don Boone, Louisville, speaker; Billy Bowie, Louisville, music; Walter Simmons, pastor.

**Pine Grove, Picayune**: Aug. 25-28; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Tony Lambert, Brandon, evangelist; Benjy Rigney, Unity, music; Reggie Bridges, pastor.

**First, Lauderdale**: Aug. 18-21; services will begin at 11 a.m. on Sunday and 7 p.m. each night; Randall Creel, Petal, evangelist; Donnie Cobb, Cuba, Ala., music; Jerry Bishop, pastor.

**Highland, Crystal Springs**: Aug. 25-30; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; James Messer, Theodore, Ala., evangelist; Ronnie Cottingham, Lucedale, music; David Patterson, pastor.

**West Ripley, Ripley**: Aug. 15-17; 7 p.m.; Wade Morris, Birmingham, Ala., speaker; Terry Lawson, Germantown, music; Bill Baker, pastor.

**Horseshoe Church (Holmes)**: Aug. 16, 17 and 18; 7 p.m., nightly services; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Glenn Warrington, Yazoo City, guest speaker; Kerry Burrough, pastor.



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3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

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## S. Solesbee convicted on fraud counts

DALLAS (ABP) — Steve Solesbee, age 51, son of veteran Southern Baptist missionaries and president of Missionary Kids International Fellowship, has been convicted in U.S. District Court on 12 counts of bank fraud, wire fraud, and bankruptcy fraud.

A parade of 50 witnesses during eight days of trial portrayed Solesbee as a con artist who lived opulently while using friendships with Baptist missionaries and pastors to defraud companies and bilk people out of their life savings. One of the wire fraud counts for which he was convicted originated in Mississippi.

Solesbee, who filed bankruptcy at least eight times in the past 20 years, had answering services in Conroe, and Wichita Falls, Texas; Fort Myers, Tampa, and Port Charlotte, Fla.; Honolulu; and two in Atlanta. He operated under the names Answer USA, William S. Solesbee Special Trust, Galloway Special Trust, McKinney Communications, American Messaging Centers, Bonaventure Travel Agency, Stephens Communications, Inc., American Answering Service, Inc., Presidents Travel, Inc., Imperial Tours, VIP Answering Service, and Amalgamated America.

Blue Mountain College students continued to excel at the 2002 Phi Beta Lambda State Competition held in Jackson. The Parliamentary Procedure Team was inducted into the Mississippi Hall of Fame. Other students who placed in state competition were Heather Bland, New Albany, first in job interview; and Frank West, Ripley, first in impromptu speaking. Dot Jackson, head of the department of business, was presented the Golden Apple Award at both the 2000 and 2001 National Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) Conferences for being the Longest Standing PBL Business Club advisor.

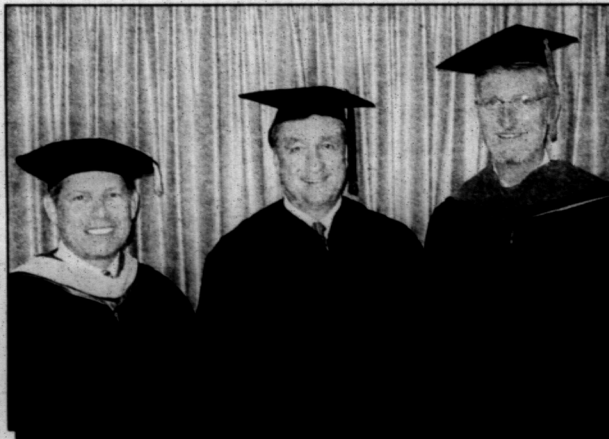


Bland and West

Mississippi College will begin its 177th year when fall semester classes begin. Night classes will start on Aug. 26 and day classes will start on Aug. 28. Lee G. Royce, president, will address faculty, staff, and friends at the opening convocation of the fall semester on Aug. 23 at 10 a.m. in Swor Auditorium.

Mississippi College will welcome new and returning students and faculty during a series of activities beginning Aug. 19. Freshmen, transfers and upperclassmen are set to arrive over the weekend of Aug. 24-25. Freshmen will participate in many special activities during "Welcome Week," Aug. 24-30, that will introduce them to campus life.

Summer commencement ceremonies closing the 176th academic session at Mississippi College were held Aug. 3 at 10 a.m. in A. E. Wood Coliseum on the Clinton campus. Mississippi College President Lee G. Royce on approximately 130 graduates conferred



Royce, Barron, and Gordon.

degrees. Royce's address entitled, The Power of Faith, examined the powerful concept of faith as the motive power for all worthy action in life. Joe Barron, senior pastor of Northrich Church, Richardson, Texas, brought the Invocation. Giving the Benediction was Keith Gordon, consultant, Pastor Leadership Development of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Jackson. Pictured (from left) are Royce, Barron, and Gordon.

State Farm Insurance Companies has given a \$15,000 grant to establish an endowed scholarship in the School of Business at Mississippi College (MC). The establishment of the endowed scholarship is a first for State Farm Insurance

Companies. State Farm has given grants to colleges in Mississippi and throughout the United States for many years, but this is the first time the company has established an

endowed scholarship. Pictured (from left) are Lee Royce, president of MC; Marcelo Eduardo, dean of the School of Business, and Web Howell, State Farm vice president for agency.



Royce, Eduardo, and Howell

## STAFF CHANGES

Macedonia Church, Petal, has called Jerry Doggett as pastor effective Aug. 8. Doggett previously served for 12 years as pastor of Poplar Springs Church, Mendenhall.



Doggett

Mark McDonald has resigned as pastor of Mt. Zion Church, Leake County. He now serves as pastor of Herbert Church in Neshoba County. McDonald is a graduate of

Mississippi College and Slidell Baptist Seminary.

Chuck Fowler has retired as pastor of Tula Church, Oxford, after 35 years in the ministry. He is a 1969 graduate of Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth and has pastored churches in Tennessee, Texas, Mississippi, and Indiana. He is available for supply, revival, and Bible conferences. Telephone: (662) 234-8764.



McDonald

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**HOMECOMING** - Leland, Lakeview Baptist Church 50th Anniversary Sunday, September 22, 2002; services begin at 10:30 a.m., dinner and afternoon singing, S.B. Boyett, Pastor.

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**MINISTER OF MUSIC & EDUCATION:** New Hope Baptist Church is looking for the person God has selected to serve as minister of education and music. Education and experience a must. Salary and benefits determined by education and experience level. Please send resume to: Search Committee, New Hope Baptist Church, 508 New Hope Church Road; Foxworth, MS 39483.

**PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER:** New Hope Baptist Church is looking for a part-time youth minister. Please send resume to: Search Committee, New Hope Baptist Church, 508 New Hope Church Road, Foxworth, MS 39483.

**CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH,** Hattiesburg, Miss. is currently seeking a bi-vocational minister of music. Please send resumes c/o Music Search, Calvary Baptist Church, 3139 Oak Grove Road, Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

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**FLOWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH** is seeking a part-time youth minister. Please send resume to 1649 Old Fannin Road, Flowood, MS 39232, Attn: Personnel Department.

**PARK PLACE BAPTIST CHURCH** Pearl/Brandon, is seeking a pianist who is comfortable with blended services. Multiple services. Call (601) 939-6282.



## MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Editor:

Just this week I heard, again, about a pastor who has given into the mid-life church syndrome. A church's community changes or a church outgrows their facilities so the pastor pulls out of the hat the idea of picking up stakes and moving out to "the ideal place for growth." Now don't get me wrong. It is God's will that his church grow, so God does indeed lead churches to move — but just not with the frequency we ordained types have led many a congregation to believe.

The New Testament model is grow and then divide. The evidence is clear that larger churches, while poster children for excellence and exuberance, have greater obstacles to overcome when it comes to the Great Commission. And that, my dear friends, is what we are about more than anything else.

Obviously, there are occasions when moving is the only viable option and many churches have waited until this was their only option, but let's remember that the goal is not to be the biggest on the block. Perhaps when space starts to become a premium God isn't leading us to relocate at all. What he may want us to do is replicate, become the vessel of extending his kingdom's borders. Such a humbling and honorable "move" most likely will preclude a church from being listed in "Who's Who." Nevertheless, it most certainly will help nurture a church setting where more genuine disciples are forged. This, my friends, is our measurement of success.

Paul L. Smith, pastor  
First Church, Calhoun City

## 100 YEARS CELEBRATED

Editor:

First Church, Oloh, will celebrate its Centennial (1902-2002) on October 20. The Centennial celebration will begin a three-day revival which will feature former pastors and music directors.

Former members of First Church, Oloh, and alumni of Oloh School are invited to attend the celebration. They are also urged to send current addresses and any memorabilia, especially pictures of families, weddings, and activities to Homecoming Committee, c/o FBC Oloh, 36 Oloh Church Road, Sumrall, MS 39482.

Norma Brewer  
Nancy Chain  
Publicity Comm.

not afraid of change. We just believe that some changes are in Smith's words, "unhealthy." The older hymns used in most of our churches have stood the test of time. There is more substance and sound theology in the older hymns. They better prepare us for a true worship experience. Those hymns allow us to sing joyful praise to our Heavenly Father and help us to be reverent at the same time. However, new songs are added to our hymnals from time to time.

In considering the youth music issue, I see more entertainment value in most of the music than actual spiritual value. Some churches are incorporating youth music and traditional music. Let's

try to keep a well-balanced service which exalts our Lord. Sometimes it is important to be still and know that he is God (Psalms 46:10).

It is sad to see division within our churches between the youth and the adults. I am thankful that I grew up in a time when the youth and adults met in the same sanctuary to sing hymns, pray, and hear the pastor preach the word of God.

If the music is the reason for youth leaving the churches, they may need a better understanding of true worship. "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth." (John 4:24)

Mary Broome  
Hickory Grove Church  
Sumrall

## ANNIVERSARY PLANNED

Editor:

Parkway Church, Natchez, will be hosting its 50th Anniversary Celebration on Nov. 9 and 10. All past members are encouraged to contact the church to be placed on the mailing list for the events at (601) 442-7434 or mail to 117 Sgt. S. Prentiss Drive, Natchez, MS 39120.

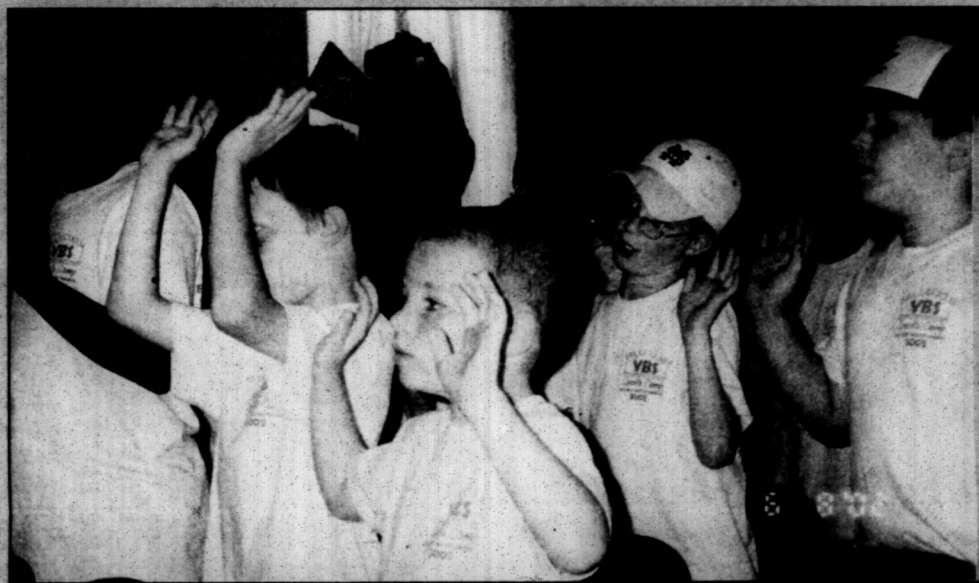
Danita Jones  
Natchez

## JOYFUL PRAISE

Editor:

I read M. W. Smith's article regarding church music. Those of us who are older, are

## Hillcrest Church sports VBS



The children of Hillcrest Church, Jackson, experienced a different kind of Vacation Bible School (VBS) this summer. Instead of the standard VBS curriculum, the 68 children attending the evening sessions were able to choose two of four sports offered: soccer, baseball, football, and cheerleading. During refreshment time, a different coach gave a devotion. A visit by John the Baptist (portrayed by Peggy Epperson) led the way for the plan of salvation to be presented. At the closing ceremony, each child had an Olympic-style medal placed around their neck. An offering was taken each night for the benefit of The Soup Kitchen to help a child attend camp. The Scripture for the week was 1 Cor. 9:25. (BR special photo)

# Christian leaders criticize U.S. Middle East policy

WASHINGTON (BP) — A group of Christian leaders has called on President Bush to adopt an "even-handed policy" toward the Israelis and Palestinians, in the process charging some American evangelicals have twisted Scripture to provide unqualified support for Israel's government.

In a letter to Bush, 60 signers, identifying themselves as American evangelicals, endorsed a U.S. policy that "affirms the valid interests" of both sides in the Middle East conflict. They also told the president the "American evangelical community is not a monolithic bloc in full and firm support of present Israeli policy."

"Significant numbers of American evangelicals reject the way some have distorted biblical passages as their rationale for uncritical support for every policy and action of the

Israeli government instead of judging all actions — of both Israelis and Palestinians — on the basis of biblical standards of justice," they wrote.

In their letter, the writers endorsed a free state for the Palestinians. They condemned the suicide bombings that have occurred for nearly two years and the failure of the Palestinian Authority "to stop the violence against Israeli citizens."

Their letter also urged Bush to oppose injustice, "including the continued unlawful and degrading Israeli settlement movement."

"The theft of Palestinian land and the destruction of Palestinian homes and fields is surely one of the major causes of the strife that has resulted in terrorism and the loss of so many Israeli and Palestinian lives," they wrote. "The continued Israeli military

occupation that daily humiliates ordinary Palestinians is also having disastrous effects on the Israeli soul."

Israel contends its settlements in disputed territories are not illegal.

Among those signing on to the letter were Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Seminary; author Tony Campolo; evangelist Leighton Ford; Denver Seminary Chancellor Vernon Grounds; author Gordon MacDonald; Christianity Today editor David Neff; Prison Fellowship International President Ronald Nikkel; community activists John Perkins and Eugene Rivers; former U.S. Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Robert Seiple; and Evangelicals for Social Action President Ronald Sider.

"Just exactly who among evangelicals is furnishing

'uncritical support for every policy and action of the Israeli government instead of judging all actions — of both Israelis and Palestinians — on the basis of biblical standards of justice?' asked Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville, in response to the letter.

"I don't know any evangelicals who are giving uncritical support to everything Israel does," Land said. "I don't know any evangelicals who give uncritical support to anyone but God."

"The bottom line is that Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority refuse to recognize Israel's right to exist in the land, and the Bible says that God promised that land to the Jews in perpetuity," he pointed out.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.*

*Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.*

*Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)*

*Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.*

*Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.*

*No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.*

*When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.*



## FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

### Sin: What Went Wrong?

Genesis 3:1-3,6,9-17,19,22-23

By Ruth V. Gamble

Into idyllic Eden unfolded a tragic drama. What went wrong? The serpent (Satan) appeared, tempting Eve to disobey God's only restriction in Eden: Do not eat fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, or you will die that day. Obedience would test their love for God.

What part do environment and circumstances play in our lives? Adam and Eve were created in God's image and had a perfect environment. God provided everything for their well-being and happiness. Genesis 3:8 describes a delightful relationship with God, for Adam recognized God's voice in the garden, implying a close fellowship with him.

The drama unfolds as Satan approaches Eve. This encounter

illustrates the course we still take into sin. Notice the progression - no overt attacks on God or Eve, only doubt-casting!

Satan's first approach was a sarcastic question doubting God's goodness. "Did God really say you were not to eat of every tree?" Would a good God keep something so desirable from them? Next, Satan questioned God's honesty, that they would die if they ate the fruit. Responding with an outright attack on God's honesty he said, "Ye shall not surely die." God didn't really mean what he said.

The next doubt-question concerned God's fairness and justice. "He doesn't want you to be as gods knowing good and evil." Seeds of doubt sprouted into acts of disobedience. Temptation itself is not sin; the acting out of it



Gamble

is. It is a choice God allows us to make. How deadly are Satan's seeds of doubt.

We question, too. Would God really forgive all my wrongdoing? Why do I suffer if he is good and loves me? Would he really condemn me for one act of disobedience? Does God really mean what he says? Indeed he does!

Scripture points out the consequences of sin. Ezekiel 8:14 says, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Each bears responsibility for his own sin and will suffer the "curse" of spiritual death, meaning eternal separation from God. Adam and Eve did not die physically immediately after eating the fruit, but they realized immediately their broken spiritual relationship. They became aware of their guilt, shame, and fear as they attempted to hide from God and "cover their nakedness" with fig-leaf clothes of their own making. How foolish! God saw it all and came questioning Adam, not for information, but to bring him to confess disobedience.

We cherish God's promised blessings, sometimes forgetting that he is also faithful to fulfill promised judgement.

Man was expelled from the garden, no longer to eat of the Tree of Life and live forever in their sinful state. Genesis 3:14-21 describes the penalties for each character in the drama, including eventual physical death. Hebrews 9:27 says, "... it is appointed unto men once to die (physical) but after that the judgement (spiritual)." We may die twice!

Now God announced the beginning of hostility (enmity) between good and evil, the "seed of woman" and offspring of Satan. From the woman's "seed" would come Jesus Christ. His "heel" would be bruised (not deadly), but he would crush the serpent's head (fatal wound). Revelation 20:10 describes Satan's fate: "... the devil is cast into the lake of fire... and shall be tormented day and night forever." Hebrews considers lineage to be through the male "seed." Isaiah 7:14 explains that Messiah would come from her seed, to be that of the Virgin Mary.

Paul pictures the final scene of the drama in Ephesians 5:19: "...as by one man's disobedience (Adam's) many were made sinners (us) so by the obedience of one (Jesus) shall all be made righteous (you and me)."

The secular worldview usually follows humanists, who consider "the complete realization of human personality to be the end of life and seeks its development in the here and now." (Humanist Manifesto 1: Affirmation 8). Death is the end. No judgement. No hope of Heaven. What a desolate forecast! Relativists make their own definition of right and wrong, doing what is right in their own eyes, attempting to escape guilt, refusing personal responsibility for their wrongdoing. The penalty awaits. How tragic, when a loving God says, "Come to me." 1 John 1:9 plainly shows the way: "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Amazing! Come.

Gamble is a member of Slayden Church, Slayden.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Thanksgiving

2 Samuel 21:1 - 23:39

By Bart Walker

Of all of the precious things that a man can keep throughout his life, one of the most valuable is that of a thankful disposition. David was a man for whom hardship seemed to play a leading role in his life, but there was a unique quality about David and his relationship with God that made him thoroughly thankful throughout all of his days.

This thankful attitude is evident in the Psalm that David shares concerning his deliverance from his enemies in 2 Samuel 22. In this Psalm we will see David proclaim the greatness of God's saving power, the responsive nature of God in his answer to the cries of his children, and the reliability of God as he can be trusted to be perfectly faithful in his dealings with his own.

This Psalm of thanksgiving, which is a veritable duplicate of Psalm 18, focuses on the nature

of God, The Great Savior. David describes God in the language of personal possession. With the terms "me" and "my" applied to God's attributes as Savior, David emphasizes the fact that he is not just "a" God, but he is the God of David personally!

David also describes God, The Great Savior, in terms of saving strength. God's greatness is acclaimed in words that express this saving strength with terms such as "rock," "fortress," "deliverer," "shield," "stronghold," and "refuge." In each of these terms David extols the power of God in metaphorical language that was quite picturesque to the people of David's time. These terms con-



Walker

trast God's sound reliability with the slippery or sandy footing of those who trust in anyone other than the God of Israel.

Verse 4 serves as transition from God, The Great Savior, to God, The Responsive Savior. Now David begins to show how this God of greatness has actually responded to the needs of David when he cried out to him. This reminds me of having warranty work done on my automobile. When I bought my first new car, the salesman crowed about the reliability of the car, the greatness of the automobile company, and how responsive the service department would be to any needs I have during the warranty period. He was like David in proclaiming the greatness of God. The test of this greatness came when my first trouble appeared with the car. The salesman was right; the response from the service department was great! All that was declared to be true in declaration was found to be true in experience!

This is what David teaches us about God, The Responsive Savior. He sees the weakness of his creation and desires to give grace, help, strength, deliverance, and salvation. David now describes his situation in which he finds need for salvation.

Fear-inspiring words like "torrents," "waves," "cords," and "snares" are used to evoke the emotional understanding of what it is like to need salvation and deliverance. Words of impending doom such as "death," "destruction" and "Sheol" are used to accentuate the gravity of David's plight. In the midst of a fearful situation and impending doom, David "calls" upon God and is delivered. The warranty is always honored with God!

As the Psalm continues, David asserts that it is God, The Reliable Savior, who has brought salvation to him and granted a righteousness through faith that sustains him in all situations. Note that David asserts his own righteousness in 22:21-25. Many commentators try to deal with this by simply noting

that David wrote this Psalm earlier in his life before the "Bathsheba and Uriah" events. I contend that this Psalm is placed near the end of David's days to bring to light the greatest of spiritual truths. It is not by the righteousness performed by us that we stand right before God, but by the righteousness imputed to us. Romans 4:5 says, "But to the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness." The righteousness of which David brags is that which is by faith, not works, lest any man should boast.

In this we find a beautiful picture of God's work in Jesus Christ on our behalf. God, The Great Savior, sees our need and in Christ becomes to us God, The Responsive Savior sending Jesus to die for our sins delivering us from the "cords of death" and for those who trust in him becomes God, The Reliable Savior, keeping his promises from here to eternity! What a warranty!

Walker is pastor of Parkway Church, Natchez.

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



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## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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Hunter Massey  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Luke

JULY 16-31, 2002

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Emmanuel Baptist Church in Greenwood spent several days helping with work projects for The Baptist Children's Village. The youth group helped stuff envelopes for the annual Back-to-School mailout, they painted an office building and helped move furniture for the Residential Family Ministries program of The BCV.

Ms. Evelyn Rogers  
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Jean Roy  
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The Baptist Children's Village is proud to announce the opening of our thrift store

Village Mart

August 13, 2002

313 Hwy 80 E in Clinton

Store hours

Tuesday-Friday 10 A.M.-6 P.M.

Saturday 10 A.M.-2 P.M.

All donations for Village Mart can be made at

The India Nunnery Campus

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For more information call

(601) 922-2242 or e-mail

villagemart@baptistchildrensvillage.com



# New missionaries headed for world service

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Passion for God, more than the needs of a lost world or even the command of Christ himself, is what must compel Southern Baptists to take the gospel to a lost world, International Mission Board (IMB) President Jerry Rankin told 79 new missionaries Aug. 1.

Rankin delivered his charge to the new missionaries before a capacity crowd of 2,200 during International Missions Week at

Ridgecrest, a LifeWay Conference Center in North Carolina. The appointment service capped six days of seminars, workshops, missionary testimonies, and inspirational messages.

Almost 600 emeritus missionaries were guests of honor for the week, attending their own track of conferences designed to help them with the challenges of missionary retirement and update them on what God is doing around the world through the IMB.

During the Thursday evening appointment service, Rankin told the new workers that only passion will enable them to cope with the difficulties and discouragement they will face.

"It's not sufficient just to respond to the needs of a world that's lost," Rankin said. "It's not sufficient for you to be going out of a sense of obligation that Christ said go and make disciples of all the nations."

"There's only one thing that will fulfill your call and allow God to empower you and

use you, only one thing that will keep you there to persevere through the trials and discouragement, and that's the passion God places in your heart. I pray that a passion for a lost world, a passion to be obedient to the call of Christ, a passion for God and the world that will know him will be what takes you to the mission field."

One new missionary, whose family will serve a people group in southern Asia, said he was shocked to learn that so many people have never even heard about Jesus — and God's call overcame his fear.

"As a student at Southeastern [Baptist Theological] Seminary, I was afraid God would send me to the mission field," he said. "But it was in a missions class that I learned about the 1.7 billion people who have never heard. I no longer felt fear. I felt called."

Two of the new missionaries said they had been reluctant to obey Christ's command to make disciples of all the world's tribes.

"During a Sunday morning worship service, God showed me his desire for me to serve him overseas," said one, headed with his family for the IMB's Southeast Asia and Oceania region. "For years, I had been disobedient to his call, but on that day I said yes."

"Three years ago, I came to

International Missions Week unwilling to sing 'Wherever He Leads, I'll Go,' said another, whose family will be moving to Central Asia, "but the Lord broke my heart that week."

One young woman, who will serve in eastern Africa with her husband and five children, testified clearly about the passion that was propelling them overseas.

"We and our precious five children were privileged to live among an unreached people," she said. "And our hearts are breaking because of the special love God has given us for a people who are living without a hope."

Rankin encouraged the new missionaries to let God's passion for a lost world fill their hearts as they move toward their overseas assignments.

"Why are you here tonight?" Rankin asked the new missionaries. "You are going not just because of the need of a lost world, not just because our Lord said to go, but because of the passion God has planted in your heart that compels you."

"It's that passion that will enable you to persevere. It's that passion that will continue to draw you to your Savior to depend on him. And it's that compelling heart for God that will allow him to empower you and pour his grace upon you."



**CALLED TO SERVE** — Andrew and Crystal Tattre of Polk City, Fla., were among 79 new Southern Baptist missionaries appointed Aug. 1 at Ridgecrest, a LifeWay conference center in North Carolina. The Tattres and their son Nathaniel will serve in the International Mission Board's Eastern South America region. (BP photoby Sandy King)

## IMB trustees hear reports of missions activities

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Despite opposition on many fronts, God is moving in dramatic ways to draw lost souls to himself, International Mission Board (IMB) trustees were told during an Aug. 1-3 meeting at Ridgecrest, a LifeWay Conference Center in North Carolina.

For the first time in history, the people of Bosnia have a New Testament in their own language, reported Rodney Hammer, who leads IMB work in Central and Eastern Europe.

"In the last three months, your missionaries in Bosnia, along with volunteers, distributed 6,000 copies of that New Testament to Bosnian families, even amidst threats that they must cease and desist," Hammer said, "and the amazing thing is that, because of prayers and the mighty moving of God, they are seeing 85 percent of the families accepting it and placing it in their homes. We praise God for that."

God also is at work among Colombians who have fled the civil war that is ravaging their country, said Dickie Nelson, leader of IMB work in the Caribbean Basin.

"These people have no hope in their lives," Nelson said, "but in the past two years, teams of missionaries have trained 65 new church leaders to start con-

gregations. One of those leaders, a man named Gabriel, in turn trained others, and 110 new churches have been started in a seven or eight-state area since May 2001."

The trustees appointed 79 new missionaries before a capacity crowd of 2,200 at Ridgecrest. Almost 600 emeritus missionaries were guests of honor for the week, attending their own track of conferences designed to help them with the challenges of missionary retirement and update them on what God is doing around the world through the IMB.

A steady increase in the total number of missionaries continued in 2001 with a year-end total of 5,057 (a net gain of 152), the report said. A net increase of 108 among long-term personnel (career, associate, apprentice) represented a one-year growth rate of 2.9%, the largest percentage increase in the category in a decade. A net increase of 44 among short-term personnel (ISC, journeyman, LifeWay, masters) represented a one-year growth rate of 3.6%, the lowest percentage increase in the category in a decade.

The 10-year average annual growth rate for the combined categories was 2.6%.

In 2001, the board lost 270 missionaries by attrition, a rate of 5.1%, the report noted. Since

1990, attrition rates have fluctuated between 3.6-5.3%. The average rate for the period is 4.4%. The three most common factors related to resignation were calling (18.5%), spousal employment issues (17%), and stateside job opportunities (16.3%).

With the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering falling \$6.3 million short of its 2001 goal, the board must reduce spending and manage its finances prudently, IMB president Rankin told the trustees.

The shortfall will be made up by canceling three million dollars designated for overseas capital needs and cutting the remainder from the board's operating budget, Rankin said. Those cuts will not affect missionary support or strategic needs overseas.

He offered trustees a word of encouragement, however.

"Yes, the stock market is in decline. Yes, charitable giving is diminishing — but last year Southern Baptists took \$8.9 billion into their offering plates," he said. "Less than 2.5% of that found its way to international missions."

"God has blessed Southern Baptists, and the resources are there, but our churches must realign their priorities, create a passion for reaching a lost world and join God on mission. "As we pray that the Lord of

the harvest would continue to thrust out laborers into the harvest, let us also pray that the financial support will follow. We must not be distracted, but keep our eyes on him and be obedient to our calling."

Trustees processed transfers of six missionary units (11 people) from one field of service to another, resignations of 28 units (53 people), one termination and two medical disabilities. They approved 23 sales and transfers of property and endorsed three longevity salary increases for International Service Corps missionary units. They also received a report of \$1.04 million disbursed for 36 hunger, relief, and development projects in 12 of the board's 15 regions.

Six of the missionary units resigning (12 people) cited a Jan. 31 request to affirm the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message as a factor in their decision to resign, said Avery Willis, the board's senior vice president of overseas operations. Five other units (10 people) had previously resigned over the request. A total of 5,364 missionaries currently are serving overseas through the IMB.

IMB trustees will hold their next meeting Sept. 5-7, at First Church in Springdale, Ark. A missionary appointment service is set for 6 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 8, at the church.

### Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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JND DAW BXFM ZP  
AXVDV VAUBB JW  
WIUBDWM KC  
ONMLTWCD, UCM LXM  
DAUD KV AXBQ VAUBB  
JW VUCEDKPKWM KC  
FKLADWXNVCWVV.  
KVUKUA PKSW: VKID-  
WWC

Clue: V=S

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: PSALMS FORTY-SEVEN: ONE